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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 BRIDGETOWN 000567

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR INL AND WHA/CAR
DOJ FOR DEA

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SUBJECT: Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean: NAS Summer 2009
Update

REF: (A) BRIDGETOWN 438; (B) BRIDGETOWN 514

SUMMARY

11. (SBU) The following is a summary of law enforcement and counter-narcotics activities and training for July and August 2009 in Embassy Bridgetown's AOR. Most of the reporting period was dominated by a JIATF-S led operation, Operation Flying Fish II, which resulted in numerous contacts with drug runners and a small number of seizures -- with the discrepancy between the two a result of resource constraints, legislative constraints, and some local corruption. Embassy Bridgetown will lose its NAS Professional Associate at the end of September, leaving this vital position vacant until a new PA position can be staffed. The Embassy looks forward to receiving an NSDD-38 request from INL to fill a full-time NAS position in the ongoing summer, 2010 bidding cycle. End Summary.

RECENT ENFORCEMENT SUCCESSES

12. (SBU) The following is a snapshot of recent narcotic enforcement/seizures in the region:

The DEA Bridgetown Office was instrumental in planning and coordinating Operation Flying Fish II, a combined air-maritime operation between the Regional Security System (RSS) airwing and JIATF-S to detect, monitor and interdict vessels suspected of illicit trafficking within RSS waters. To support the operation, US Navy and Coast Guard assets were deployed to the region along with additional assets that participated as available. A local DEA agent was the primary point of contact for the operation and coordinated the flow of strategic intelligence to air/interdiction assets and flew aerial surveillance missions with the RSS. The operation lasted from July 6, 2009 through August 24, 2009. Seizures as a result of this operation are reported along with other enforcement actions under the various country sections below:

BARBADOS:

On July 19, 2009, the Royal Barbados Police Force Drug Squad executed a search warrant at a residence pursuant to a joint DEA investigation of a known drug trafficker in Barbados. No drugs were recovered. However, approximately \$77,450 Barbados (\$38,725 USD) was seized from the residence. No occupants claimed ownership. A Venezuelan and Trinidadian national were arrested at the residence for immigration violations.

DOMINICA:

On August 21, 2009, Dominica authorities executed a search warrant at a residence pursuant to a joint investigation with DEA and arrested two Jamaican nationals following the seizure of approximately 1 kilogram of cocaine and materials indicating that the cocaine was being sewn into women's under garments for smuggling by air couriers.

ANTIGUA:

On September 3, 2009, a Jamaican national was arrested at the Antigua International Airport upon arrival from Jamaica pursuant to the seizure of seven pounds of marijuana discovered inside a false compartment in his luggage.

ST LUCIA:

On July 7, 2009, as part of Operation Flying Fish, the USS Hawes while patrolling RSS waters observed a Venezuelan pirogue vessel with six outboard engines, numerous fuel drums and 9 individuals aboard. The vessel fled south to elude the Hawes until several engines were disabled by Helo sniper. The occupants claimed Venezuelan citizenship for themselves and the vessel and stated they were fishing (no fishing gear on board). Thereafter, diplomatic protocols for conducting further search were initiated by LEDT. The wait for diplomatic clearance took throughout the day and into the early morning hours of July 8, 2009, during which time the Hawes was unable to prevent the disabled vessel from drifting into Venezuelan Territorial Waters. The USS Hawes lost sight of the vessel and the mission became a search and rescue mission. On July 9, 2009, intelligence was received that the pirogue crew had made it safely back to Venezuela with one engine.

BRIDGETOWN 00000567 002 OF 005

On July 22, 2009, a female Jamaican national was arrested by St Lucia Customs authorities at the airport in Castries, St. Lucia pursuant to the seizure of 1.3 kilograms of cocaine from a concealed compartment in her luggage. Investigation revealed that the female was a courier for a Jamaican drug trafficking organization in St Lucia.

On July 25, 2009, as part of Operation Flying Fish, the USCGC Dependable intercepted a go-fast vessel following maritime pursuit in the territorial waters of St. Lucia that resulted in the seizure of approximately 103.5 kilograms (228 pounds) of marijuana. The three crew members, Dominica nationals, were arrested by St. Lucia authorities and pled guilty in St. Lucia District Court, receiving fines and/or prison sentences. The vessel was forfeited. Personnel from the islands of Dominica and St. Lucia were embarked as "ship riders" to provide jurisdictional authority for operating in RSS territorial waters.

On July 31, 2009, as part of Operation Flying Fish, the USCGC Dependable detected a go-fast vessel with two persons on board near St. Lucia territorial waters. The go-fast was chased to shore where it beached itself. The occupants abandoned the vessel and fled on foot. The USCGC secured the vessel and recovered a package containing approximately six pounds of marijuana. Custody of vessel, contents and all evidence was turned over to the St. Lucia Marine Police.

On August 15, 2009, USCGC Dependable and USCG HC-130 coordinated an interdiction of St Lucia go-fast vessel pursuant to Operation Flying Fish. The USCG HC-130 detected a Venezuelan pirogue headed south and a northbound go-fast approximately 39 nautical miles south of St Lucia. The USCGC Dependable intercepted the go-fast and searched for two white bales jettisoned one-half mile prior to intercept. The jettisoned bales were not recovered, and the St Lucia go-fast vessel and two occupants were turned over to St Lucia authorities for follow up.

On August 19, 2009, USCGC Dependable, HMS Iron Duke, and the RSS air wing coordinated interdiction of a Venezuelan pirogue pursuant to Operation Flying Fish. RSS detected a Venezuelan pirogue (8 Persons on board, 5 outboard engines, 18 fuel barrels) and coordinated an intercept by HMS Iron Duke approximately 35 miles east of St

Vincent. A helicopter asset observed the crew jettisoning 3-4 bales prior to intercept. The pirogue had no signs of nationality (or registration papers) and the crew claimed Venezuelan nationality (none with ID). No one claimed to be captain/master of the vessel and all claimed to be Venezuelan fisherman paid to tow a fishing vessel stranded in the area (150-200 miles north of Venezuela). There were no tow lines on the vessel and no radio/communication devices to contact another ship, no GPS or other navigation aids. Ion scan swipes returned evidence of cocaine in several areas of vessel. Royal Navy and USCG assets searched water for 16 hours with negative results and released the vessel.

On 8/19/09, St Lucia authorities arrested three St Lucia nationals and seized approximately forty kilograms of cocaine believed to be received from a Venezuelan pirogue on August 18, 2009. On that date, DEA had initiated a maritime interdiction operation with Flying Fish assets that ended with negative results.

TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

13. (SBU) The following is a breakdown of training and assistance provided during summer 2009 in the region:

NAS FUNDED OR FACILITATED:

a. International Issues in Asset Forfeiture Course, Columbia, South Carolina, July 2009: Prosecutors from the Department of Public Prosecutors (DPP) and Financial Investigation Units from Dominica, Grenada and St Kitts joined colleagues from the Caribbean, South and Central America and Mexico attended this conference sponsored by the Department of Justice Criminal Division.

b. DARE International Officers Training Conference, Orlando, Florida July 21-24, 2009: NAS assisted in arranging the participation of five DARE Officers representing Antigua, Barbados, Grenada and St Lucia to join over 1500 DARE officers, educators and school administrators at this conference which offered over forty training workshops.

c. Regional Security System (RSS) Advanced Patrol Course, Grenada, August, 2009: NAS funded and helped coordinate this course which was

BRIDGETOWN 00000567 003 OF 005

four weeks in length and graduated thirty officers from all seven countries in our region. The course developed officers in survival skills and jungle environment marijuana eradication. During the course participants lived in tents and while traversing the jungles of Grenada they were able to locate and eradicate over 800 marijuana plants.

RSO/DS FACILITATED:

a. Surveillance Detection Training, Barbados April 27 - May 28, 2009: A total of twenty police officers from throughout the region were trained in Surveillance Detection methods as part of the DS/ATA Program.

b. Forensic Examination of Terrorist Crime Scenes, Barbados, June 8-19, 2009: A total of twenty-four law enforcement officials from throughout the region were trained in this subject. The course was coordinated by DS/ATA and RSO.

c. Digital Forensics Equipment Grant & Consultations, Antigua, September 14-25, 2009: A total of twelve personnel were trained in digital forensic equipment.

d. Cyber Crime Workshop, Nassau, September 21-24, 2009: A total of fourteen personnel including representation from Embassy Bridgetown AOR received training in Cyber Crimes. The training was facilitated by DS/RSO in concert with DOJ-OPDAT.

e. RSO is assisting the Department of Justice, Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (DOJ-OPDAT) Latin America Region to liaison with regional police departments.

LEGAT(FBI) FACILITATED:

- a. Mid-level Management Leadership Seminar, St Kitts, July 6-10, 2009: This seminar sponsored by DOD, DTRA and FBI was attended by 100 participants from throughout the Caribbean to include Guyana, Surinam, Belize, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.
- b. Major Case/Crisis Management Training, August 31 to September 4, 2009, Dominica: This course was attended by thirty officers from the Dominica Police Force.

FORCE PROTECTION DETACHMENT (NCIS):

- a. Crime Scene Investigation Seminar, Dominica, August 17 - 20, 2009: This seminar was attended by twenty-five officers, lead investigators and detectives from the Dominica Police Force.
- b. Equipment Donations: August, 2009: Partnering with RSO, FPD delivered computers and digital scanners to Dominica, St Lucia and Grenada. The equipment was placed in the respective Immigration Departments (Port of Entry) and will enable the officers to transmit suspect documents for verification in an effective and secure manner.

U.S. MILITARY FUNDED (MLO/DOD):

Tradewinds Initial Planning conference (IPC): Funded two representatives from each country to participate in Miami in a SOUTHCOM-sponsored large scale exercise to further security in the region.

FAHUM (IPC) (Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias): Large Scale disaster relief exercise. Hosted some 30 U.S. and Eastern Caribbean disaster relief planners at the Embassy.

HMS Iron Duke in July: Supported the activities of the HMS Iron Duke in Barbados.

USCG C-130 and Navy E2 Hawkey deployment to Barbados in furtherance of Operation Flying Fish 2.

MLO Office conducted a 7-nation, two-week Annual tour of the islands to meet and discuss issues with regional leadership.

Traditional Commander's Activities for July and August were:

- 1. Infantry squad exchange.
 - a. Nine Barbados Defense Force infantry to Fort Indiantown Gap, PA, to exchange with the Kentucky National Guard.
 - b. Nine Kentucky National Guard infantry to Paragon, Barbados, to exchange with Barbados Defense Force.
- 2. Explosive Ordinance exchange. Two Saint Kitts Police Force and two Saint Kitts Defense Force to the Bahamas to exchange with NORTHCOM.

BRIDGETOWN 00000567 004 OF 005

Dominica and St Lucia provided a shiprider on a USCG cutter for 30 days in August in support of Operation Flying Fish 2.

NAS TRAVEL AND ACTIVITIES

- a. (SBU) Narcotic Affairs Officer Jack Zalewski traveled to FSI to attend the INL Orientation Workshop July 20-24, 2009.
- b. NAO and NAS Budget analyst traveled to Grenada in August of 2009 to meet with Police, Financial Investigation Unit and Coast Guard to inquire as to their progress and needs, and to conduct end use monitoring of NAS provided equipment.
- c. NAS coordinated and attended a meeting in July, 2009, at Embassy Bridgetown for the locally based head of Social Development Section of the EU together with two visiting EU personnel from Brussels representing the Caribbean Unit at the European Commission in Brussels. The meeting was attended by Embassy Political Chief,

USAID, and NAS relative to EC/EU initiatives in the region and how they might complement upcoming CBSI programs and funds.

d. The NAO joined the Permanent Secretary from the Prime Minister's Office in Grenada in providing remarks at the graduation of thirty officers of the Regional Security System (RSS) Advanced Patrol Course in Grenada in August, 2009.

OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT NEWS

14. (SBU) The following is a summary of other law enforcement activities in the region:

a. (SBU) On September 25, 2009, the Department of State and the Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) training office will dedicate a new cyber forensics laboratory in Antigua. This is the culmination of a 3-year project and total expenditures approximating \$800,000.

b. (SBU) Crime-related gang activity continues to be a hot button issue within the region. In addition to St. Lucia experiencing a higher than normal murder rate associated with drugs and gangs (ref a), St Kitts and Nevis has recently acknowledged their frustration with gang violence. On August 11, 2009, the St Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister demanded full implementation of the anti-gang plan and policy, and the mobilization of the intelligence and operational arms of the anti-gang unit following the murder of a 14-year-old school girl in a gang-related shooting.

c. (SBU) During the period of August 12-13, 2009, Embassy Bridgetown played host to the second working group meeting for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). Embassy Bridgetown assisted WHA in the coordination of this event. The United States was represented by members of the Department of State, USAID, the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Southern Command, the Joint Interagency Task Force-South, and representatives from U.S. embassies throughout the Caribbean region. The Caricom nations were represented as was the Dominican Republic. This meeting followed the first meetings held in Paramaribo in late March. A series of discussions was held concerning a declaration and action plan and a decision was made to have the Dominican Republic host the next CBSI working group (ref b).

COMMENT

15. (SBU) Although there were many success stories attributed to the Operation Flying Fish program in the region during the period of July 6 to August 24, 2009, which are detailed in this cable under enforcement successes, a continuing theme emerged relative to the failure of an appropriate regional maritime response capacity. On a number of occasions US Navy, Coast Guard and RSS Air Wing personnel were able to detect and monitor suspicious vessels involved in drug smuggling but were unable to affect an arrest or seizure based on the lack of maritime assets in the region or the unavailability of existing maritime assets, crews or communication problems. This will continue to be the weak link in enforcement operations in the region. Embassy Bridgetown would encourage the use of CBSI funding to address this important component.

16. (SBU) The Embassy will lose its invaluable NAS Professional Associate in September, 2009. This position has provided

BRIDGETOWN 00000567 005 OF 005

much-needed and long-neglected full-time oversight to the NAS program. NAS coverage will be a critical fill as we move forward with CBSI planning and implementation. The Embassy is re-advertising the Professional Associate position as a stop-gap measure, and is very much looking forward to receiving an NSDD-38 request from INL to refill the NAS Director position, which has been vacant since 2006, with a FTE position in the summer 2010 cycle.

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